

Reframing Daphne

After Apollo and Daphne

One by one, the windows lose themselves to darkness.

A young woman picks up her phone, slips out the door
legs it down the back lane. She's on the thin side,
in what might be jeans, strung out pale between the lamplights.

Her hair's not long or lustrous, nor wind-combed
as she flees; there's no leaping deer-like
through grass or trees, no woodland groves for her—
it's dustbins she's avoiding in the shadow-clogged village streets
with their bolted doors and ambiguous gutters

—yet she's striding now, taking her story
with her. It seems she's making for the alpine pass, leaving
tufts of ancient foliage by the river trembling in her wake.
Having sloughed the god at her heels,
the woman steps out of the myth.

One by one, the stars above her turn their brilliance on.